

# Graduate and Professional Student Government

## Assembly Board Meeting Minutes

University of Pittsburgh

Thursday July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

Zoom Link: <https://pitt.zoom.us/j/98596852912> (263643)



### Meeting Summary

- Discussion and vote on reducing the Graduate Student Fee for AY 2020-2021 due to COVID-19

### Attendance

#### GPSG Executive Board Officers:

- Malena Hirsch (President)
- Morgan Pierce (VP of Committees)
- Deanna Mudry (VP of Communications)
- Yashar Aucie (VP of Finance)
- Jazzkia Jones (VP of Programming)
- Amanda Leifson (GSA)

#### GPSG Assembly Board Members:

- CSSA
- GOSECA
- LAGOS
- TASA
- Arts & Science (1)
- Arts & Science (2)
- Biomedical
- SCI
- Dental
- Education

- Engineering
- GSPIA
- SHRS
- Katz (Full-Time)
- Law
- Pharmacy (PharmD)
- Social Work
- Public Health

#### Absent:

- ANKUR
- ISA
- Arts & Science (3)
- Katz (Part-Time)
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Pharmacy (PhD)

#### Guest:

- Dean Kenyon Bonner (4-4:15 pm)

### 1. Call to Order

- President Hirsch called the meeting to order at 3:31 pm

### 2. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve February minutes. *Minutes approved. None opposed.*

### 3. Old Business

- Updated Contact Information – please respond if your organization has not yet responded
  - This will help us ensure that we are still in communication with all organizations during this upcoming year

### 4. Reports

- President's Report
  - Quick introductions for the new GPSG Executive Board
  - This summer we have been more active, as we're sure many of you have also been with the all the ongoing events (COVID-19, BLM, ICE-SVEP)
  - Statement of Solidarity with Black Lives Matter, discussing with Dean Bonner to ensure diversity and inclusion in Pitt
    - Statement published June 2020
    - Jazzkia is working with Dean Bonner and other graduate students to create/ensure a Black graduate student specific organization
  - COVID-19 Response
    - Working with the Provost Office to ensure that graduate student perspectives are being considered during the reopening of the university
  - International Students

- We sent out the ask earlier this month to ask students to contact members of Congress to overturn the ICE-SVEP guidelines
    - a. Thank you to those who shared the information with your students and choose to participate
- Committees' Report
  - Currently looking to staff university committees
    - There will be a Google Form sent out to the Assembly Board soon in order to staff the numerous committees across the university
    - Want to make sure that there is a diverse representation of graduate students across a variety of different spectrums (racially, ethnically, disciplines/graduate schools)
- Communications' Report
  - Trying to get more information about graduate student events on our social media, so look for emails about that
- Finance's Report
  - Budget proposals from the cultural groups were received, so the budget will be introduced to the EB at our next meeting, and then will be introduced to the AB in our August meeting
    - According to our bylaws, the proposed budget will be introduced in August. Voting on the budget will happen in September
  - Travel Grants Accepting Applications in August
    - The focus will be on registration fees
    - SHRS – is there more information for graduate students?
      - a. Same application process as before
      - b. Still funding 10 \$400 grants per month
      - c. Supplemental funding – going to be limited due to restrictions on in person events, but will have roughly the same process as last year
    - LAGOS – is there an estimation when the budget would be approved?
      - a. EA – September is when we will have a finalized budget
- Programming's Report
  - 2020 Diversity Forum <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/forum2020>
    - Tuesday, July 28<sup>th</sup> – Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup>
    - [https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_c023v9RwerlpFpr](https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_c023v9RwerlpFpr)
    - The aim of the Diversity forum—free and open to all—is to foster the community learning, discussions, and actions necessary to advance social justice across our respective communities
    - Announcing the winners of the Art Showcase at the Diversity Forum
  - Black Graduate Student Organization
    - Working with students and administrators to bring together a black graduate student organization
      - a. There are smaller diversity specific organizations in particular schools, but wanted to make sure there is an overarching organization across all the schools
      - b. More detail to come
- Executive Administrator's Report
  - Ombudsperson Feedback
    - <https://www.provost.pitt.edu/students/graduate-studies/school-ombudspersons>
  - Purdue Survey
    - Dr. Blake Allan, Patrick Murphy (Purdue University)
    - Investigating academic experiences of domestic PhD students who come from low-income or lower/working class backgrounds
      - a. [https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_dnlj2aBTg81ejLn](https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dnlj2aBTg81ejLn)
- Assembly Board Member Reports
  - *Arts & Sciences*

- Several students come forward with issues of discrimination, or lack of inclusion in their department;
  - a. With these incidents, there seems to be no real avenue for consequences
  - b. No real results when these incidents are communicated with Title IX Office or the Ombudsperson unless there is actual physical harm
- *Biomedical*
  - No report
- *Dental Medicine*
  - No report
- *Education*
  - No report
- *Engineering*
  - Leadership transition, working on future virtual events
  - Student led initiative to collect information about student events with racism, discrimination
    - a. Student led initiative; Ombudsperson in Engineering was made aware
    - b. Anonymous website to log experience so the student could send it to university administration
    - c. Email Matt ([mab595@pitt.edu](mailto:mab595@pitt.edu)) if we want more information
- *GSPIA*
  - A number of conversations with faculty and students
    - a. June – BLM
    - b. July – Diversity and Inclusion forum
      - i. Looking to make these forums open to alumni, other departments
      - ii. To either help facilitate their own forums or to participate in these discussions
  - In response to BLM concerns –
    - a. In the process of amending our constitution to include a director of Diversity and Inclusion on the board; will also participate in Diversity committee
- *School of Computing & Information*
  - Leadership transition, working on virtual/in person events
  - Determining budget moving forward
- *Katz (Full Time)*
  - Is it possible to create a document so schools can share information, tips on what types of virtual events they are holding?
    - a. EA – Fantastic idea; we will explore how best to facilitate an exchange of ideas on these topics
- *Katz (Part Time)*
  - No report
- *Law*
  - No report
- *Medicine*
  - No report
- *Nursing*
  - No report
- *Pharmacy (PharmD)*
  - No report
- *Pharmacy (PhD)*
  - No report
- *Public Health*
  - Student Led Newsletter
    - a. Currently working on a plan

- b. Intended to learn what departments, student organizations, students are doing
- *School of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences*
  - Clinical internships happening for the summer
    - a. Sent out a survey in order to get a feel for how students are feeling about COVID-19 situation
      - i. Physical Therapy students – one concern is related to PPE
  - Meeting scheduled with the Dean to determine how to best to ensure in person classroom experiences
  - Interdisciplinary bonding
    - a. Collaborative Peer Conference – working on how to make this event virtual
- *Social Work*
  - No report
- *ANKUR*
  - No report
- *CSSA*
  - No report
- *ISA*
  - No report
- *LAGOS*
  - Leadership change this summer
  - Also interested in collaborative information about virtual events
  - How can organizations learn about what the guidelines are for in person events
    - a. President – University COVID page is a good place to start ([www.coronavirus.pitt.edu](http://www.coronavirus.pitt.edu))
      - i. There is probably an approval process for certain in person events this Fall
    - b. EA – SORC is also going to be an important source of information, especially for student organizations
  - Hispanic Heritage Month – September
    - a. Looking to have some events related to this
- *GOSECA*
  - Leadership change
  - Aggressively looking for more officers to get involved
    - a. Will have more information to share with students in the next couple of weeks
    - b. EA – Feel free to send any information/calls for students to [gpsg@pitt.edu](mailto:gpsg@pitt.edu)
      - i. If any AB member has information, events, etc. that they wish to share with other AB members/schools, feel free to let us know and we will share it with the group
- *TASA*
  - No report

## 5. Committee Reports

- See full reports on website ([www.gpsg.pitt.edu](http://www.gpsg.pitt.edu))

## 6. New Business

- Graduate Student Fee Discussion
  - Dean Bonner has asked that the Assembly Board consider reducing the Graduate Student Fee
  - Graduate students pay \$30 per semester
    - Half goes to GPSG; Half goes to school organizations
    - This arrangement is according to our Bylaws
  - Proposed recommendation: “For the Fall 2020 semester, the graduate student fee will be reduced to \$24. If the COVID crisis continues into Spring 2021, the fee will remain \$24. After this year, the fee will return to \$30.”
    - 20% Reduction: \$24

- a. SGB and other campuses are reducing their fees by 20%
  - b. \$12 to GPSG, \$12 to GSGs
- 33% Reduction: \$20
  - a. Initial proposal; CGS & GPSG both initially proposed 33%
  - b. \$10 to GPSG; \$10 to GSGs
- SBG, CGS, and GPSG Presidents came together to decide to reduce the student fees for each of their respective organizations
  - EB in agreement as well
  - There is a difference in what graduate students and undergraduate students pay (\$30 v \$100)
- Assembly Board Discussion
  - TASA – do organizations use all their money that they are allocated each year?
    - a. Finance – It is up to the various organizations, we don't have that information
    - b. TASA – why the different recommendations?
  - Dean Bonner –
    - a. TASA -- In response to the question about the difference between the 33% and 20% reduction
      - i. It is up to each of the different organizations to decide what we do; we can be autonomous. If you wanted to do the 33%, then you can recommend that to the Board of Trustees
      - ii. It's just what was recommended because all the other student governments reduced 20% so that there is some consistency for all students
        - 1. If we choose to do the 33%, we would just need to be prepared with an answer to address any concerns the Board of Trustees might have
    - b. Programming – is how the fees are divided different between SGB/CGS/GPSG?
      - 1. Yes – SGB has a lot more administrative overhead, student organizations; GPSG is half to GPSG, half to the schools
    - c. GOSECA – does most of the money go to in person events?
      - 1. Yes (clarification below)
      - 2. Follow up – is the money used another way?
        - a. Finance – extra money last year was given to the university's Emergency Fund; we do typically use rollover money from previous years
    - d. If need be, we can revisit the fee for the Spring semester if we wished to only change one semester at a time to see what the situation is like
      - i. Most organizations are seeing this as a one time event
      - ii. SGB has reserved the right to return to regular fees in the Spring
        - 1. Dean Bonner suspects that they will need to reduce their fee for the next semester as well
  - LAGOS – who gets the reduction?
    - a. President – according to the bylaws, half and half
    - b. Follow up – in the GPSG budget, where is the reduction happening?
      - i. Programming – most of it will be due to a reduction of costs from moving from in person to virtual events
      - ii. EA – In our budget, Programming takes about 40% of our budget. Cultural groups and supplemental funding take another 20%, Travel Grants take another 20%, and other Office Expenses take the other 20%
    - c. TASA – why are we charging a fee?
      - i. President – there are still things that are going to be expensed, and we are going to try to have events, things for students even in this virtual

- ii. Committees – some of the in-person event costs will move over to these virtual events; fees go to other things. Also, it is probably better to have a consistent cut across the year, rather than revisiting this issue next semester
- Motion for Secret Ballot Vote
  - a. “The Assembly Board recommends that the Graduate Student Fee for AY 2020-2021 is reduced 20% to \$24. The Graduate Student Fee for AY 2021-2022 will return to \$30.”
  - b. Motion Passes – 20 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain
- International Students
  - ICE-SVEP [guidelines](#) were updated on July 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Office of International Student has a website dedicated to Fall 2020 issues: <https://www.ois.pitt.edu/2020grad>
  - If students have any individual concerns, they can email [ois@pitt.edu](mailto:ois@pitt.edu)
  - OIS Webinar: July 17<sup>th</sup>, 8am
    - To register: [https://pitt.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_g2xDoqnYSkuOdmg4xGkglw](https://pitt.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_g2xDoqnYSkuOdmg4xGkglw)
  - July 14<sup>th</sup>: Government [rescinds](#) ICE-SVEP guidelines
    - Regardless of the rescinded guidelines, what resources and support do our international students need still?
  - Thank you to all who participated in either calling your members of Congress or shared the information with students
- New Vice Provost for Graduate Studies Dr. Amanda Godley
  - <https://www.pittwire.pitt.edu/news/amanda-godley-named-vice-provost-graduate-studies>
  - Appointed at the beginning of July
  - If you have anything that you feel she should know, please let us know

## 7. Announcements

- PROPOSED Fall 2020 Assembly Board Meetings: **3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month, 4:30-6 pm**
  - August 25<sup>th</sup> (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday)
  - September 15<sup>th</sup>
  - October 20<sup>th</sup>
  - November 17<sup>th</sup>
  - December 15<sup>th</sup>

Meeting Adjourned at 4:55 pm